

# **State of Alaska FY2026 Governor's Operating Budget**

## **Department of Public Safety Search and Rescue Component Budget Summary**

**Component: Search and Rescue****Contribution to Department's Mission**

Preserve public peace; protect life, property, and resources.

**Core Services**

- Initiate search and rescue (SAR) action for the recovery of lost or missing persons.
- Coordinate rescue operations for injured persons; conduct recovery operations for deceased persons.
- Coordinate small and large-scale responses to search and rescue events including resource management, interagency coordination, and the use of private resources, various agencies, and private persons.
- Reimburse public and private organizations for resources spent during search and rescue operations.
- Coordinate aircraft for search and rescue missions.
- Provide logistical support and technical expertise to local law enforcement and volunteer organizations, including provision of equipment, search management, and planning operational support.
- Train and support volunteer resources through professional conferences, local seminars, and practical exercises.
- Review training plans submitted by volunteer organizations.
- Manage worker's compensation program for volunteer search and rescue participants while engaged in search and rescue activities.
- Coordinate resources with the rescue coordination components of the Alaska National Guard and U.S. Coast Guard to meet the requirements of the National Search and Rescue Plan.
- Manage preventative programs to educate the public on wilderness-related risk and methods to mitigate risk and reduce the loss of life or injury to persons.
- Provide tuition-free classes to target audiences, including high school students and young adults, in avalanche-prone areas of the state. Emphasis is given to areas having a history of avalanche-related emergencies.
- Maintain, repair, supply, and track portable Alaska Land Mobile Radio (ALMR) for Department of Public Safety commissioned personnel to include Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Wildlife Troopers, Fire Life and Safety and Court Service Officers.

**Major Component Accomplishments in 2024**

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) responded to 598 search and rescue (SAR) related incidents in FY2024. These incidents included overdue hunters, snowmobilers, hikers, boaters, aircraft crashes, and medical evacuations off the road system. Within these 598 incidents, more than 600 persons were assisted, located, or recovered. DPS issued 11 Silver Alerts and no Amber Alerts in fiscal year 2024.

DPS and SAR partners statewide responded to more than 100 emergency beacon alerts and 23 reported aircraft crashes.

DPS partnered with the Alaska Avalanche Information Center under contract to provide backcountry safety training to the public in Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Valley, Copper River Basin, Fairbanks, Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Mt. Edgecumbe, Skagway, Haines, Valdez, Thompson Pass, Kenai, and Summit Lake.

DPS continues to support the Alaska Search and Rescue Association (ASARA), with training, coordination, and administrative support. ASARA's mission is to provide volunteer SAR teams with funding for training and equipment, advocacy at the local and state level, and liaison with DPS. Under ASARA, the Alaska Incident Management Team (AIMT) strives to provide AST with a well-trained team to manage SAR missions which are large scale, complex, or extend into multiple operational periods. The team is also trained to provide virtual search support and plans.

SAR operations are complex and challenging missions that require coordination and cooperation among different agencies and resources. One of the resources increasingly utilized in SAR operations is the tactical flight officer (TFO). A TFO is a trained law enforcement officer who assists the pilot and provides aerial support to ground units. TFOs can use advanced equipment such as infrared cameras, and mapping systems to locate missing persons, track

suspects, or assess hazards. TFOs can also communicate with ground units and other aircraft to relay information and coordinate actions. TFOs enhance the safety and effectiveness of SAR operations by providing a valuable perspective and assistance from the air.

## **Key Component Challenges**

Alaska's unpredictable environmental factors make every search and rescue (SAR) mission an emergency. The Department of Public Safety (DPS) is statutorily required to provide SAR operations for lost, missing, and deceased persons on land, regardless of location. DPS receives assistance from federal, state, local, and volunteer agencies to fulfill this responsibility. SAR decisions prioritize the safety of searchers and are based on the likelihood of mission success under acceptable conditions. DPS provides technical expertise and support to local SAR teams, local police departments, and Village Public Safety Officer personnel.

As the civil authority for SAR operations, DPS must exhaust all available resources before requesting military assistance through the 11<sup>th</sup> Air Force Rescue Coordination Center on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) is responsible for SAR operations at sea and frequently assists DPS along Alaska's coastline. The U.S. Air Force handles searches of downed or missing aircraft and also frequently supports DPS efforts. Volunteers in communities across the state play a crucial role in SAR missions. DPS relies heavily on local assets and volunteer resources, and when these resources are unavailable or insufficient, DPS turns to the military for assistance. Maritime and inland searches involving USCG, or Air Force assets are not traditionally billed to DPS in accordance with joint Memorandums of Understanding.

## **Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2026**

The department will continue to support volunteer organizations through training, activity coordination, and increased participation in joint operations statewide. DPS expects to assist new volunteer organizations to become operationally ready for SAR missions. DPS will continue identifying gaps in response capabilities and address these through training, inter-agency cooperation, or partnerships. Strengthening relationships with federal, state and local partners remains a priority to enhance SAR efficiency and effectiveness for Alaskan citizens.

DPS will continue building a strong team to support the SAR Coordinator position, including collaboration with the State Emergency Operations Center – Emergency Management section.

The department is committed to modernizing the radio inventory by upgrading more users to Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA) capable radios. TDMA radios enhance spectrum efficiency, reduce interference risks, and support multiple users on limited bandwidth. The upgrade will include all aircraft and vessel radios. DPS will employ the APX Next radio systems by Motorola Solutions, a two-way radio designed for public safety, in areas not covered by the Alaska Land Mobile Radio (ALMR) network. These systems will allow seamless integration with cellular networks, enhancing officer safety and improving public service in underserved rural areas.

## **Statutory and Regulatory Authority**

DPS-Powers and duties of department (AS 44.41.020)  
State Troopers (AS 18.65.010 - AS 18.65.110)  
Police Protection (AS 18.65.010 - AS 18.65.790)  
Law enforcement duties (AS 18.65.010 - AS 18.65.086)  
Search & Rescue (AS 18.60.115 - AS 18.60.175)  
Department to assist other agencies (AS 18.65.090)  
Missing Persons Information Clearinghouse (AS 18.65.600 - AS 18.65.660)  
Law Enforcement Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (AS 18.65.900 - AS 18.65.909)  
Search and Rescue of Person (13AAC 20.005 - 13AAC 20.035)

**Contact Information**

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**Component Detail All Funds**  
**Department of Public Safety**

**Component:** Search and Rescue (513)  
**RDU:** Alaska State Troopers (160)

Non-Formula Component

|                                   | FY2024 Actuals | FY2025 Enrolled | FY2025 Authorized | FY2025 Management Plan | FY2026 Governor Adjusted Base | FY2026 Governor | FY2025 Management Plan vs FY2026 Governor |             |  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|---|-------------|--|
| 1000 Personal Services            | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0               | 0.0                    | 0.0                           | 0.0             | 0.0                                       | 0.0%        |  |
| 2000 Travel                       | 46.1           | 12.5            | 12.5              | 47.5                   | 47.5                          | 47.5            | 0.0                                       | 0.0%        |  |
| 3000 Services                     | 122.7          | 227.5           | 227.5             | 227.5                  | 227.5                         | 227.5           | 0.0                                       | 0.0%        |  |
| 4000 Commodities                  | 37.9           | 77.0            | 77.0              | 42.0                   | 42.0                          | 42.0            | 0.0                                       | 0.0%        |  |
| 5000 Capital Outlay               | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0               | 0.0                    | 0.0                           | 0.0             | 0.0                                       | 0.0%        |  |
| 7000 Grants, Benefits             | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0               | 0.0                    | 0.0                           | 0.0             | 0.0                                       | 0.0%        |  |
| 8000 Miscellaneous                | 0.0            | 0.0             | 0.0               | 0.0                    | 0.0                           | 0.0             | 0.0                                       | 0.0%        |  |
| <b>Totals</b>                     | <b>206.7</b>   | <b>317.0</b>    | <b>317.0</b>      | <b>317.0</b>           | <b>317.0</b>                  | <b>317.0</b>    | <b>0.0</b>                                | <b>0.0%</b> |  |
| <b>Fund Sources:</b>              |                |                 |                   |                        |                               |                 |   |             |  |
| 1004 Gen Fund (UGF)               | 206.7          | 317.0           | 317.0             | 317.0                  | 317.0                         | 317.0           | 0.0                                       | 0.0%        |  |
| <b>Unrestricted General (UGF)</b> | <b>206.7</b>   | <b>317.0</b>    | <b>317.0</b>      | <b>317.0</b>           | <b>317.0</b>                  | <b>317.0</b>    | <b>0.0</b>                                | <b>0.0%</b> |  |
| <b>Designated General (DGF)</b>   | <b>0.0</b>     | <b>0.0</b>      | <b>0.0</b>        | <b>0.0</b>             | <b>0.0</b>                    | <b>0.0</b>      | <b>0.0</b>                                | <b>0.0%</b> |  |
| <b>Other Funds</b>                | <b>0.0</b>     | <b>0.0</b>      | <b>0.0</b>        | <b>0.0</b>             | <b>0.0</b>                    | <b>0.0</b>      | <b>0.0</b>                                | <b>0.0%</b> |  |
| <b>Federal Funds</b>              | <b>0.0</b>     | <b>0.0</b>      | <b>0.0</b>        | <b>0.0</b>             | <b>0.0</b>                    | <b>0.0</b>      | <b>0.0</b>                                | <b>0.0%</b> |  |
| <b>Positions:</b>                 |                |                 |                   |                        |                               |                 |   |             |  |
| Permanent Full Time               | 0              | 0               | 0                 | 0                      | 0                             | 0               | 0   | 0.0%        |  |
| Permanent Part Time               | 0              | 0               | 0                 | 0                      | 0                             | 0               | 0   | 0.0%        |  |
| Non Permanent                     | 0              | 0               | 0                 | 0                      | 0                             | 0               | 0   | 0.0%        |  |

**Change Record Detail - Multiple Scenarios with Descriptions**  
**Department of Public Safety**

**Component:** Search and Rescue (513)  
**RDU:** Alaska State Troopers (160)

| Scenario/Change Record Title   | Trans Type      | Totals       | Personal Services | Travel      | Services     | Commodities | Capital Outlay | Grants, Benefits | Miscellaneous | Positions |          | NP       |
|--|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|
|  |                 |              |                   |             |              |             |                |                  |               | PFT       | PPT      |          |
| ***** Changes From FY2025 Enrolled To FY2025 Authorized *****  |                 |              |                   |             |              |             |                |                  |               |           |          |          |
| <b>FY2025 Enrolled</b>   |                 |              |                   |             |              |             |                |                  |               |           |          |          |
| 1004 Gen Fund  | Enrolled        | 317.0        | 0.0               | 12.5        | 227.5        | 77.0        | 0.0            | 0.0              | 0.0           | 0         | 0        | 0        |
|  |                 | 317.0        |                   |             |              |             |                |                  |               |           |          |          |
|  | <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>317.0</b> | <b>0.0</b>        | <b>12.5</b> | <b>227.5</b> | <b>77.0</b> | <b>0.0</b>     | <b>0.0</b>       | <b>0.0</b>    | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> |
| ***** Changes From FY2025 Authorized To FY2025 Management Plan *****   |                 |              |                   |             |              |             |                |                  |               |           |          |          |
| <b>Align Authority with Anticipated Expenditures</b>   |                 |              |                   |             |              |             |                |                  |               |           |          |          |
|  | LIT             | 0.0          | 0.0               | 35.0        | 0.0          | -35.0       | 0.0            | 0.0              | 0.0           | 0         | 0        | 0        |
| Transfer authority from commodities for anticipated travel costs. The remaining commodities authority is sufficient to cover anticipated expenditures. |                 |              |                   |             |              |             |                |                  |               |           |          |          |
|  | <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>317.0</b> | <b>0.0</b>        | <b>47.5</b> | <b>227.5</b> | <b>42.0</b> | <b>0.0</b>     | <b>0.0</b>       | <b>0.0</b>    | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> |
| ***** Changes From FY2026 Governor Adjusted Base To FY2026 Governor *****  |                 |              |                   |             |              |             |                |                  |               |           |          |          |
|  | <b>Totals</b>   | <b>317.0</b> | <b>0.0</b>        | <b>47.5</b> | <b>227.5</b> | <b>42.0</b> | <b>0.0</b>     | <b>0.0</b>       | <b>0.0</b>    | <b>0</b>  | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b> |

**Line Item Detail (1676)**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Travel**

**Component:** Search and Rescue (513)

| <b>Line Number</b>               | <b>Line Name</b>             |  | <b>FY2024 Actuals</b> | <b>FY2025 Management Plan</b> | <b>FY2026 Governor</b> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 2000                             | Travel                       |  | 46.1                  | 47.5                          | 47.5                   |
| <b>Object Class</b>              | <b>Servicing Agency</b>      | <b>Explanation</b>   | <b>FY2024 Actuals</b> | <b>FY2025 Management Plan</b> | <b>FY2026 Governor</b> |
| <b>2000 Travel Detail Totals</b> |                              |  | <b>46.1</b>           | <b>47.5</b>                   | <b>47.5</b>            |
| 2000                             | In-State Employee Travel     | Travel for search and rescue missions or to attend specialized training.     | 17.8                  | 19.0                          | 19.0                   |
| 2001                             | In-State Non-Employee Travel | Volunteer search and rescue mission travel.                                  | 26.3                  | 26.5                          | 26.5                   |
| 2002                             | Out of State Employee Travel | Employee out of state travel to attend specialized training and conferences. | 2.0                   | 2.0                           | 2.0                    |

**Line Item Detail (1676)**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Services**

**Component:** Search and Rescue (513)

| Line Number                        | Line Name                         |   | FY2024 Actuals | FY2025 Management Plan | FY2026 Governor |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 3000                               | Services                          |   | 122.7          | 227.5                  | 227.5           |
| Object Class                       | Servicing Agency                  | Explanation   | FY2024 Actuals | FY2025 Management Plan | FY2026 Governor |
| <b>3000 Services Detail Totals</b> |                                   |   | <b>122.7</b>   | <b>227.5</b>           | <b>227.5</b>    |
| 3000                               | Education Services                | Emergency response public education training courses, conferences, workshops and memberships. | 29.9           | 45.0                   | 49.8            |
| 3004                               | Telecommunications                | Phone and cellular service.   | 10.4           | 10.4                   | 10.4            |
| 3005                               | Health Services                   | Health services for State Troopers.   | 0.2            | 0.2                    | 0.2             |
| 3006                               | Delivery Services                 | Freight, postage or courier services.   | 2.6            | 2.6                    | 2.6             |
| 3008                               | Utilities                         | Propane or other utility costs in support of SAR missions.                                    | 0.5            | 0.6                    | 0.0             |
| 3009                               | Structure/Infrastructure/Land     | Room and space rental for conferences or meetings.  | -1.0           | 1.0                    | 0.0             |
| 3010                               | Equipment/Machinery               | Equipment maintenance, improvement or repair costs.   | 19.9           | 64.5                   | 64.5            |
| 3011                               | Other Services                    | Other services in support of public awareness, training or program manual printing costs.     | 0.0            | 8.0                    | 8.0             |
| 3020                               | Inter-Agency Building Maintenance | Trans - Department-wide   | 0.0            | 3.2                    | 0.0             |
| 3033                               | Inter-Agency Aircraft             | PubSaf - Aircraft Section (2537)  | 60.2           | 92.0                   | 92.0            |



**Line Item Detail (1676)**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Commodities**

**Component:** Search and Rescue (513)

| Line Number                           | Line Name                   |   | FY2024 Actuals | FY2025 Management Plan | FY2026 Governor |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 4000                                  | Commodities                 |   | 37.9           | 42.0                   | 42.0            |
| Object Class                          | Servicing Agency            | Explanation   | FY2024 Actuals | FY2025 Management Plan | FY2026 Governor |
| <b>4000 Commodities Detail Totals</b> |                             |   | <b>37.9</b>    | <b>42.0</b>            | <b>42.0</b>     |
| 4000                                  | Business                    | Consumable office supplies used for training materials or command post demonstrations.                  | 2.6            | 2.4                    | 2.4             |
| 4002                                  | Household/Institutional     | Field rations or food for search and rescue volunteers, special protective gear or other welfare items. | 3.9            | 2.8                    | 2.8             |
| 4004                                  | Safety                      | Safety and first aid supplies.  | 0.2            | 2.0                    | 2.0             |
| 4013                                  | Lube Oils/Grease/Solvents   | Maintenance supplies for emergency equipment.   | 0.1            | 0.7                    | 0.7             |
| 4015                                  | Parts and Supplies          | Parts used for repairs and maintenance on emergency equipment.  | 6.6            | 6.6                    | 6.6             |
| 4019                                  | Small Tools/Minor Equipment | Small tools and minor equipment purchased for search and rescue missions.                               | 0.0            | 3.0                    | 3.0             |
| 4020                                  | Equipment Fuel              | Search and rescue vehicle fuel.   | 24.5           | 24.5                   | 24.5            |

**Inter-Agency Services (1682)**  
**Department of Public Safety**

**Component:** Search and Rescue (513)

|  |                                   |                                  |   | FY2024 Actuals | FY2025<br>Management Plan | FY2026 Governor |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Component Totals</b>                                    |                                   |                                  |   | <b>60.2</b>    | <b>95.2</b>               | <b>92.0</b>     |
| With Department of Transportation<br>and Public Facilities |                                   |                                  |   | 0.0            | 3.2                       | 0.0             |
| With Department of Public Safety                           |                                   |                                  |   | 60.2           | 92.0                      | 92.0            |
| <b>Object Class</b>  | <b>Servicing Agency</b>           | <b>Explanation</b>               |   | FY2024 Actuals | FY2025<br>Management Plan | FY2026 Governor |
| 3020   | Inter-Agency Building Maintenance | Trans - Department-wide          | Headquarters yard maintenance and snow removal.   | 0.0            | 3.2                       | 0.0             |
| 3033   | Inter-Agency Aircraft             | PubSaf - Aircraft Section (2537) | RSA with Alaska Wildlife Troopers aircraft section for use of state aircraft during missions. | 60.2           | 92.0                      | 92.0            |